Chapter 9
Colleges and Access

Colleges and Universities Producing Videotapes

We sent questionnaires to a sampling of the state's four-year and two-year colleges and universities, based on whether they had Communications, TV, or Film Departments or Audio-Visual Resource centers, according to published listings. Of the 97 that answered our survey, 94 had equipment and produced videotapes of some sort.[1]

The 29 which had put programs on access channels in the past year averaged 2.1 hours per week. However, ten were the main production centers for access in their community, and they averaged 8.4 hours per week.[2] Many of these were community colleges.

About half produced videotapes for curriculum needs or as part of curriculum, for example as student projects. A handful produced tapes only as an extracurricular activity, for example, taping school sports, or maintaining a school news magazine produced by a student TV club. About 20% produced videotapes both for curriculum and as an extracurricular activity.

In most cases, both students and staff worked on productions. This included audio-visual office staff, faculty, and students in courses, as interns for the audio-visual office, or in clubs. At some schools, only the audio-visual office staff produced tapes. Community volunteers were allowed to participate in production at only a few schools.

However, community members and organizations were involved in about half the schools in cooperative productions, some intitiated by students or staff, others by community members. A variety of community organzations, arts organizations, other schools (especially high schools and other colleges), government agencies or officials, cable systems and libraries worked together with New York State colleges to produce videotapes.[3]

Some examples of college/access co-productions

Local history:

On Italian-Americans revisiting Ellis Island, made with a Brooklyn Church

Local organizations & industry:

With The Harmabee Club, a Black organization
With the Rural Development Agency
With Queensboro Public Library
Training tapes for local industries

Health & seniors:

With Meals on Wheels
With the Red Cross
With the Arthritis Foundation

Sports:

"Big Red Hockey Report" with Cornell University

Art and culture:

With Neuberger Museum
With Nassau Symphony Orchestra

Social issues:

On crimes against women, with a rape and abuse crisis center
On a local water treatment plant
With American Professors for Peace in Middle East
With Tri-City Women's Organization for the Handicapped
With the League of Women Voters
With the Police Department on DWI laws

With other schools:

Quiz series for BOCES
With the Cooperative Extension

Are These Tapes Shown on Access?

Just about half of the colleges we surveyed showed tapes on access. These averaged just over two hours a week in the year of our survey.

Why did colleges program tapes on access — or why not? Two respondents explained why they were *not* interested in presenting student work on access. At the State University of New

Ithaca College

Video & Access:

Broadcast Operations, part of the School of Communications, was in charge of prodcuing programming for cablecast during the school year, two nights a week. The school was a main production center for public access in Ithaca, with "more air time than any other body on Channel 13 access." On Sunday nights it was able to use its live feed. Students did all production, with staff acting as "engineers only."

Programs:

The regular schedule included:

SUNDAY
7 pm - "Newswatch" - local news/news magazine
7:30 - "Working It Out" - for high school students
8 - "Panorama" - talk show with local politicians and others
9 - "Bon Voyage" - travel show
9:30 - "Just For Fun" - local entertainment, movie reviews
10 - special single programs
10:30 - "Sound Stage" - music
11 - "Newswatch" - repeat

WEDNESDAY
7 pm - "Newswatch"
7:30 - "Consumer Line" - call-in
8 - "Body Wishes" - aerobics
8:30 - "Sportsweek"
9 - "Panorama" - repeat
10 - special single programs - repeat
10:30 - "Soundstage"
11 - "Newswatch"

Other programming ran on a closed-circuit system within the college.

A lot of cooperative production was done in conjunction with the "Panorama" and "Newswatch" series. Examples included "Working It Out" segments with students from Ithaca High School, "Big Red Hockey Report" with Cornell University, segments with the League of Women Voters and other community organizations, and election results with the local Board of Elections.

Equipment:

Equipment included five half-inch VHS and twelve 3/4-inch portable decks, 17 three-tube cameras, two half-inch editing systems, seven 3/4-inch editing systems, two mobile vans, two studios with a live feed.

Training:

Training was offered as part of the regular curriculum.

Budget:

Broadcast Operations had a budget of $11,000, but, said Director Paul Smith, "Remember, we have slave labor here." Also, Broadcast Operations solicited "trade-outs" with local merchants.

Publicity:

Schedules were distributed, PR was sent to local media, and programs were listed in the on-air cable programming guide.

York at Potsdam, where students worked in a broadcast quality studio, students' tapes were occassionally played on PBS affiliates and local commercial stations. Alfred Roman, Director of the Division of Media Arts and Technology, said his department was not interested in access because "the audience is more limited" than it was for their other outlets. Bob Klaeger, Chair of the Department of Literature and Communications at Pace University in Pleasantville, told us he rarely programmed students' work on access because he worried that the quality of other work on access would put the the University's reputation in a bad context, and that it would divert students from the intent of their assignments. He also worried about giving the cable company programming for free.

On the other hand, twelve of the colleges not presently on access hoped to begin programming in the near future. A few were waiting for new production equipment or a live feed. Several were waiting for finalization of the cable franchise in their area. One school's administration had turned down the department's request to run access programming, and in two other cases a change in cable company ownership ended previous programming.

Approximately eight of the 97 colleges we surveyed were actively involved in access, with over two hours of programming per week.

Other Outlets for Videotapes

Of course, colleges have many outlets for the videotapes they make. Many use tapes in classrooms as part of curriculum. Usually the Audio Visual Department or Instructional Resources Center is in charge of making these tapes and providing them, along with others in their collection, for classroom use. The agricultural colleges often tape lectures, experiments and demonstrations. Drama and sports departments often tape productions, rehearsals or games for students to study. Quite a number of colleges we surveyed had closed circuit cable systems connecting campus buildings; programming here often consisted of school sports, school news magazines, bulletin boards, and imported music videos or college-oriented programming.

SUNY College at Plattsburgh

Video & Access:

The cable company provided a hook-up and a live feed at the college's Communications Center. The college provided its own swticher, playback units and TBC and a back-up ITFS microwave system. No live programming was sent out; all programs were taped.

The college used the channel designated for public access, which it then made available to the public only if they met certain (unspecified) requirements.

All maintainance and crews were the responsibilty of the college, which used cable production as a training ground, tying it directly into production classes. Students were tested and evaluated several times per semester.

Programs:

The Communications Center produced a half-hour news magazine show twice a week, plus college basketball and hockey on tape delay. Other shows included "Video Montage," "PSTV News 10," and some documentaries.

Equipment:

Equipment included four half-inch portable Beta decks, three portable 3/4-inch decks, four single-tube cameras, two half-inch editing systems, three 3/4-inch editing systems, and two studios with a live feed.

Publicity:

Distributed schedules and sent PR to local media.

Off-campus outlets for college programming noted by respondents included entire educational access channels, cable systems' Local Origination channels, local PBS affiliates, local commercial TV, and government access. One school programmed an entire low power TV system.

Equipment

New York State colleges had both half-inch and 3/4-inch production equipment. Our survey found that about half had both kinds available, and about a quarter had only half-inch or only 3/4-inch. Half-inch VHS equipment predominated over Beta, and large amounts of half-inch black-and-white reel-to-reel equipment was still owned by the colleges, although much was not in use. Colleges owned both portable and stationary playback equipment. Together, colleges averaged eleven decks each.

The majority of colleges had single-tube cameras at the time of our survey. About half had higher quality, three-tube cameras. A third had both. Many also had black-and-white cameras. Colleges averaged seven cameras each.

Editing set-ups were not as numerous. Only two thirds of those with equipment had post-production facilities. One third had had only one editing system. Over one third had two systems, and nine colleges had four or more editing set-ups. Almost all colleges with post-production capabilities had 3/4-inch editing; many had half-inch editing as well.

A handful of colleges had additional equipment. Seven had mobile vans and two had one-inch playback and editing facilities.

Nearly three quarters of the colleges in our survey had studios. About a quarter of these had two studios. Nine colleges in our survey had a live feed to the cable system. These included two with their own access channels, one with past but not current programming, one with plans for access use, and five that were either the main production center in their community or were among the most active access producers in our survey. Not surprisingly, these colleges produced much more programming for access than others did. They averaged 26 shows per month and 6.75 hours per week (counting only those active on access at the time of our survey).[5]

Community Use of Equipment

About half of the colleges we surveyed had some provision for community use of their equipment. Often, this involved rental for reduced or commercial fees, with a technician. Understandably, many colleges were reluctant to lend out equipment they needed for in-house use. Several noted that they had stopped renting to outside groups, and others said it was rare or had to be

Dutchess County Community College

Video & Access:

The college operated a low-power TV station which was also carried on the three major cable systems in Dutchess County.

J. Simpson, Audio Visual coordinator at the college, reported, "We get into 52,000 households...on the air for 18 hours a day." Six hours per week of this progamming was considered public access, but was primarily imported — not produced by the college.

Programs:

Programs produced at the college included telecourses, instructional programs taped by Media Center staff, and election coverage.

Equipment:

Equipment included two 3/4-inch portable decks, three 3-tube cameras, two single-tube cameras, two 3/4-inch editing systems, and two studios.

Budget:

$10,000

Publicity:

Distributed schedules and sent PR to local media.

either initiated by staff or specially approved. Many had served community groups and businesses as commercial clients, and, as noted above, co-productions were frequent.

Forty-seven of the colleges surveyed allowed some community use of their video facilities. Less than half charged for this use.

Many colleges made training available, often free, to staff and faculty. Thirteen colleges — mostly community colleges — also provided training to community members, mostly through production courses.

New York University

Video & Access:

The university put student-produced tapes on public access two hours per week. At the time of our survey, it was already building new facilities, which would include a cable hook-up and studios, as well as closed-circuit viewing. Students' programs occasionally ran on local PBS channel 31, WNYC.

Programs:

Programs included students' works on "NYU Video Presents," as one access series. Outside organizations could send representatives to classes to interest students in producing tapes for them or with them.

Equipment:

Equipment included twenty-five half-inch Beta and two half-inch VHS portable decks, ten single-tube cameras and ten black-and-white cameras, six half-inch editing systems, four 3/4-inch editing systems, and a CMX editing system. Video Operations Manager Bonnie Radlich helped students edit tapes into 28-minute lengths for access.

Publicity:

The school newspaper required a six-week lead time. The school used to provide listings and PR to local newspapers.

Publicity

Not all the colleges that produced tapes for access publicized their efforts. In some cases, they left it to the cable guide or on-screen channel guide to list their programs. Others distributed schedules or sent press releases to local media. Campus publications reviewed some tapes. One school published a special bulletin for its telecourse series. Another planned a series of targeted mailings to special interest groups for its shows. Some left it to students to publicize individual access showss.

Funding

Most operating funding for New York college video production came from college operating budgets. Many colleges received one-time federal grants for equipment. Some of the smaller schools noted that they had been unable to obtain these grants; others noted that they had not received money for new equipment for several years. Operating budgets were often supplemented by fees from clients, and some colleges raised funds for special projects from the New York State Council on the Arts and private foundations. Others mentioned state agencies, Federal Health and Human Services, and National Science Foundation as funders of special projects. One college representative thought equipment had been donated by a local commercial broadcaster. Two noted donations of computer and video graphics equipment from ATT.

Budgets, with and without salary figures and usually not including capital costs for equipment, ranged from nearly nothing to highly respectable: from $500 to $500,000. The average was about $40,000; the median, $11,000. Ithaca College, with a budget around the median, qualified the figure by pointing out that hours and hours of unpaid student labor made their productions happen.

Programming

The programming is, of course, what makes the structure, the equipment, and the expense worthwhile. College programming is notable for both its seriousness and its topicality — documentaries and news magazines were more numerous here than

among other groups — as well as by the wide variety of subjects covered. Some tapes are made solely by students, as course-work or in clubs. Others are made by Audio Visual or Instructional Resource staff, still others by a combination of students, faculty and staff. Not all the programming listed was shown on access. This glimpse at college-produced programming shows what a rich resource it would be for the public were it shown on access channels.

The bar graph included in this chapter shows the number of universities that reported producing particular kinds of programs.

Not surprisingly for educational institutions, the top programming category was Instructional/ Class Projects. Some colleges probably noted this kind of project in specfic subject categories as well. These shows included comedies, talk shows, portraits, documentaries, news tapes for journalism classes, dance projects, and taped performances for study and critique. Bob Klaeger, at Pace University, said that student tapes made for courses and independent study were shown on access only when they were "extremely timely or extremely good."[6]

Sports programming was not far behind. Hockey, basketball, baseball, football: College sports seemed to be taped almost everywhere, by Audio Visual or Instructional Resource Center staff, by athletic departments themselves, by students, or as co-productions with cable systems. Often, sports events were shown live on cable or the school's closed circuit system; sometimes they were shown taped.

School plays and concerts were also frequent subjects of videotapes, sometimes by request of individual departments. Elizabeth Seton College taped students' original plays. Lemoyne College taped a series of plays in practice form called "In Rehearsal." Many schools taped concerts. Cayuga College taped its visiting artists' coffeehouse series for access.

Many students, faculty and staff at New York State colleges produced documentaries. Stu-

SUNY College at Buffalo

Video & Access:

The Department of Journalism and Broadcasting offered courses to students and produced a weekly news show for cable, "Bengal Paws Magazine." The school also produced a series called "Buff State Presents." Students produced tapes in an extra-curricular fraternity video club. Access programming averaged forty shows per month, for a total of five hours per week.

Programs:

Programs included telecourses, promotional tapes, tapes of visiting lecturers, and Public Service Announcements. Cooperative productions included tapes made with other SUNY colleges and with the Birchfield Center, a local arts organization.

Archive:

A collection of tapes was kept in conjunction with the seventeen-college Western New York Consortium for Higher Education.

Equipment:

Equipment included twenty portable half-inch VHS decks, two portable 3/4-inch decks, six 3/4-inch stationary decks, two 3-tube cameras, four black-and-white cameras, one half-inch editing system, one 3/4-inch editing system, two studios, and one mobile van. Community residents could volunteer to help in production. The fees charged for equipment use depended on ability to pay.

Budget:

$70,000. Sources included fees paid by video clients, funds from the To Educate the People consortium, FIPSE, and student viewing fees.

Publicity:

Listings in the cable programming guide.

dents' projects at The New School for Social Research were particularly intriguing, including "Return to Ellis Island," about a visit by Italian-Americans, a profile of the Erick Hawkins Dance Troupe, and a documentary about elderly homeless women. Long Island University students worked with a community organization to make a tape about Polish refugees in Brooklyn, and also produced a portrait of Einstein. St. Johns University, in Queens, received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to produce a series about Spanish arts.

The staff of Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Media Service completed several tapes on agricultural research, including one about soils in Puerto Rico and Brazil. And Adirondack Community College investigated a cover-up by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and General Electric of major PCB contamination in the Glens Falls area.

Student news and magazine series were numerous. Some of these programs covered school news and were shown on closed-circuit systems on campus. Others covered local communities and ran on access or other cable channels. For example, Plattsburgh students produced a thirty-minute news program twice a week. Students at New York Institute of Technology covered Long Island news in fifteen-minute programs five nights a week. These reports were cablecast on several area cable systems.

Programs listed in our survey under "other" most often included tapes of visiting artists and lectures, documentation of campus events such as graduations, and promotional and recruiting tapes. Campus events included coverage by the State

Cayuga Community College

Video & Access:

This college was the main source of Local Origination programming in the area. All local programming — access, LO, and a Community Bulletin Board — shared one channel (Channel 6). Using a live feed, the college programmed six hours a week for the channel. In addition to producing tapes for courses in the Telecommunications Department, students took part in an extra-curricular club, the Radio & TV Guild.

Programs:

Programs included telecourses and a series featuring artists hired to play at a college coffeehouse. Local history tapes featured the Case Museum, Harriet Tubman House, and Seward House. The League of Women Voters helped cover local government events. Other programs included tapes of visiting lecturers, promotional tapes for the school, candidates' forums, and an annual telethon for non-profit groups. "Senate Update" and "Assembly Update" were produced weekly with local representatives, and shows with the Mayor, Congressional representative, and City Council members ran occasionally. Cooperative productions included one with the Upstate Medical Center, one with the Auburn Museum, and shows with the local Fire Department (about fire safety), Police Dept (on DWI laws), League of Women Voters, and Arthritis Foundation.

Equipment:

Equipment included three 3/4-inch portable decks, four single-tube cameras, three 3-tube cameras, three 3/4-inch editing systems, and one studio with a live feed. Residents of the community could borrow equipment for a fee or in-kind trade, but the school was generally reluctant to do this.

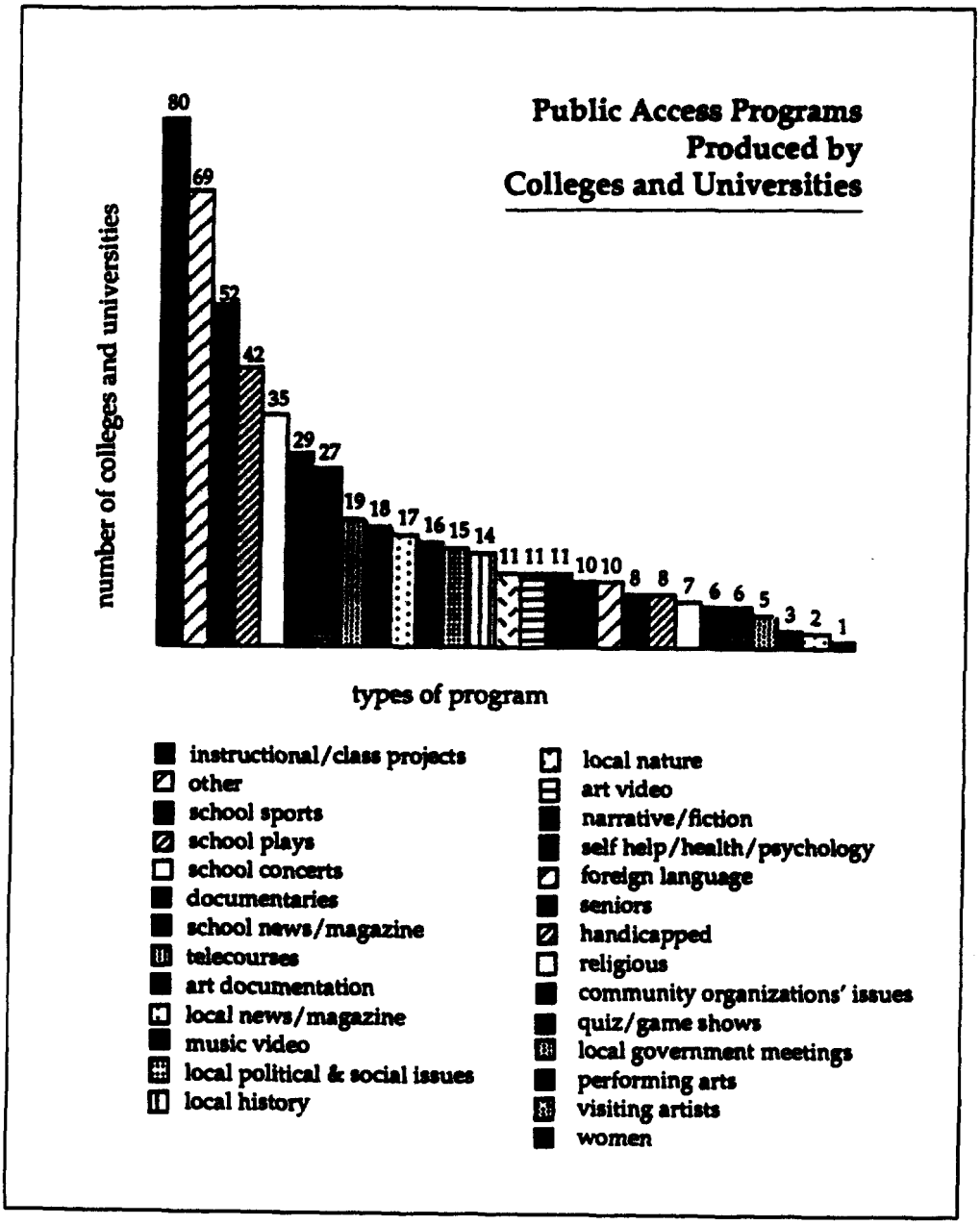
Budget:

The annual operating budget for video production was $20,000, with a capital budget of $60-75,000. The Telecommunications Department paid for the operating budget, but outside grants were raised for the bulk of the capital budget.

Publicity:

None for regular series. Publicity for individual programs depended on each program.

University of New York at Old Westbury of the first Native American symposium on campus. "Other" programs also included tapes for role-playing exercises — for example, exercises for Nursing and Education Departments at Molloy College, and mock trials and job interviews at other schools. Cornell University's Cooperative Extension produced numerous Public Service Announcements: one series of 75 on consumer education; another series of 26 of "Nutrition Puppets," including one called "Broccoli, the Superstar." Election coverage and candidates' forums fit in this category, as did a series on local ecology produced by the State University of New York at Stony Brook.



Some other examples worth mentioning include Concordia College's oral history of Bronxville, based on interviews with four former mayors, and its talks with visiting authors in a series called "Books and Coffee." Several other local history tapes featured local museums. LeMoyne College produced two tapes on political and social issues: "Perspectives on Central America" and "He Remembers Pearl Harbor." Tapes about handicapped citizens included coverage of an annual arts festival and a Special Olympics.

Twenty-nine of the colleges we surveyed

produced series, either for access or for closed circuit use. News/magazine shows usually ran as series. Other series ranged from a two-year ethnic talent showcase called "Native New York," produced by Queens College from 1980 to 1982, to quiz shows for high schools, such as "BOCES Countdown," magazine shows like "Bengal Paws Magazine," produced at the State University College at Buffalo, or "PS Niagara," from Niagara University. Another approach was taken in "NYU Presents," 28-minute compilations of works by students at New York University, shown weekly on Manhattan public access.

Notes:

1. Respondents included public and private, two-year and four-year, specialized and liberal arts colleges from all over the state. While this is not a definitive collection of all the state's institutions of higher learning, it should give an indication of the kind and scope of video activity in colleges in New York State.

2. Cayuga Community College: 6.0 hours. Columbia-Greene Community College: 2.5 hours. Corning Community College: 1 hour. Ithaca College: 8 hours. Jamestown Community College: 0.3 hours. Onondaga Community College: 1 hour. SUNY College at Plattsburgh: 12 hours. US Military Academy/West Point: 56 hours. SUNY Fredonia: 15 hours. Clarkson University: 30 hours. Together, these averaged 13.2 hours per week. However, West Point programming was produced by a 21-person staff. Disregarding West Point, the average for these main production centers was 8.4 hours per week.

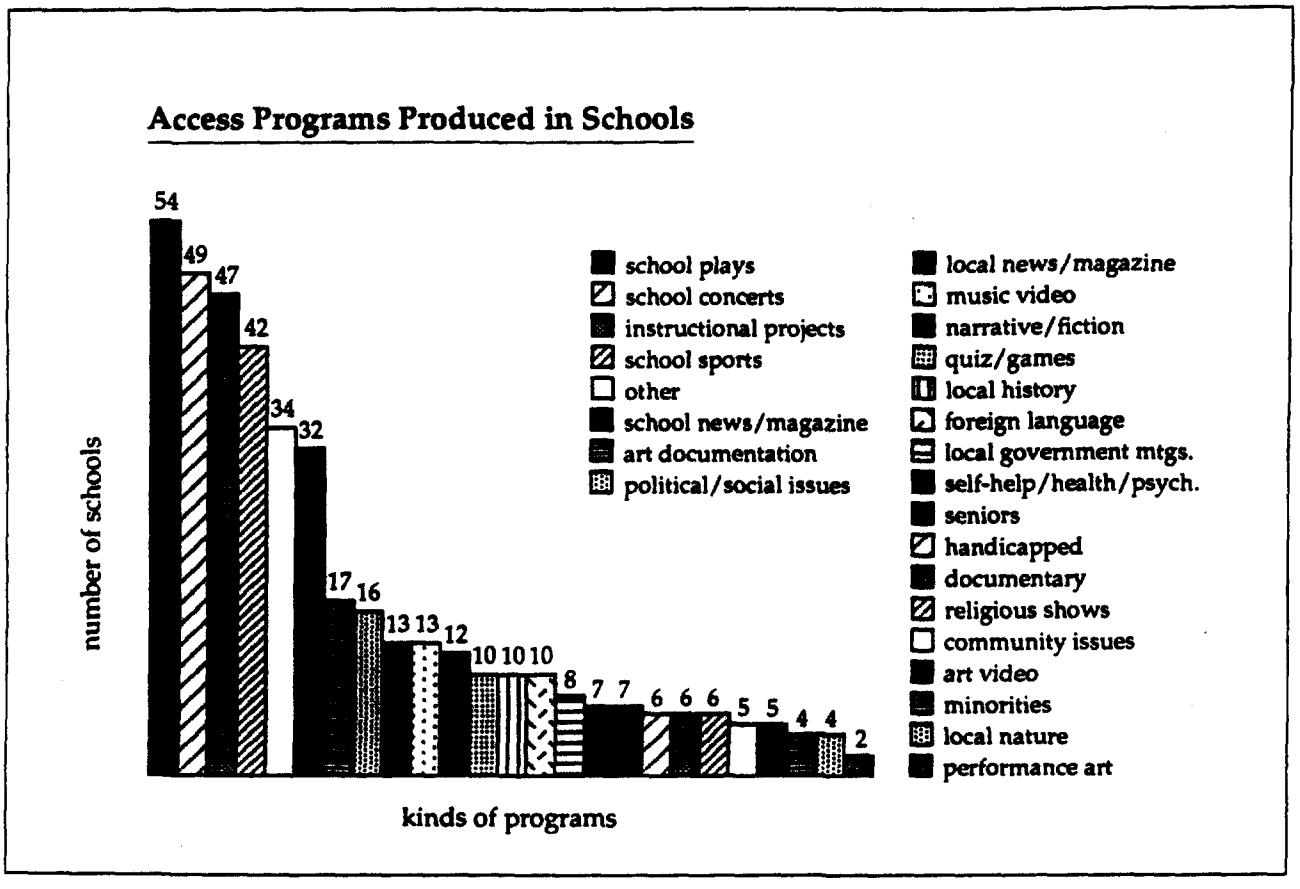
3. Erie Community College South noted an excellent relationship with the cable operator. This school co-produced programs, and through its required internship course had frequently placed student interns at the cable system. They noted that some former students had been hired as cable system staff.

Chapter 10
Public Schools and Access

Over the last decade, increasing numbers of schools have been purchasing video equipment and incorporating electronic media into their curricular and extracurricular activities. The growth of cable television in the state is related to that trend. To explore this aspect of access programming and production, we sent questionnaires to 294 public schools (K-12). We chose these schools from lists provided by the New York State Department of Education of schools that had video equipment, and from the membership roster of the state Media Art Teachers Association.

Seventy-two schools responded, representing a range of involvement with video and access programming — from occasional playback of existing tapes to producing for and programming their own educational access channels. We focus, in this chapter, on schools that used public and occasionally educational access channels. This chapter provides not a statistical survey but a glimpse at some existing models for public school use of access in New York State. We include information relating to educational access and, in one case, low power TV, because a school's choice of channel or outlet had more to do with the cable franchise than the school itself. This information also includes responses from both individual schools and school districts.

Nearly all of the schools that responded had cable TV in their communities. Six of the 72 were served by more than one cable operator. Most (64) had hook-ups to cable TV. Quite a few schools



used programming from PBS and other educational channels as educational tools. Of the 72 schools and districts that responded, sixty-six, or 92 percent, produced videotapes. More schools produced video in extracurricular activities than as part of regular curriculum. A significant number produced tapes in both contexts. About two thirds programmed tapes on access channels, averaging 2.3 shows per month, or a total of 168 shows statewide for these schools alone.

The Programs

What kinds of tapes did these schools produce? Overwhelmingly, tapes were about school activities. School plays and concerts, class projects, school sports, and school news and magazine shows lead the list. Art documentation, local news and magazine shows, tapes on political and social issues, music videos, and narratives were also noted a number of times.

A better idea of the range and type of programs can be gained from looking at some of the examples listed by the schools.

Some tapes had a specific instructional purpose, for example job interviews taped in a business class. Others enriched the curriculum or helped students investigate the medium or the world around them. Bethlehem High School productions included tapes of stories for young viewers, a documentary about the production of a senior play, and "Mods of Our Lives," a school soap opera. Scotia-Glenville students made several film take-offs, including ones on "Dr. Who," "Revenge of the Dead," "Breaking Away," and a wonderful satire called "Star Voyage." Tapes of students' original skits were also mentioned by a few schools: "A Day in the Life" from a script by a ninth grader at Algonquin Mid,dle School, was a fifteen-minute video version of a student's typical day in Troy.

Political and social issues appeared, as when Hommacks Middle School students, in Larchmont, questioned candidates for local elections, attended a New Years celebration by the local Laotion community, and followed a Service Club visit to a nursing home.

The Auburn High School History Club made a tape called "Meet Mr. Seward: Purchaser of Alaska," a dramatization of an interview with Seward, done "on location." Interviews and location footage profiled the victory of the New Rochelle Prom Queen — including "historical footage" and an interview with the Prom Queen's father about his years at the school.

Only thirteen schools listed series productions, and these examples seemed to promise exceptional quality. Screening some of the tapes confirmed this. "WHES News," produced biweekly by the News Club for both closed circuit and public access by Waterford-Half Moon Elementary School, included school news, advice, weather, documentation of school events (like a puppet show) and even lost and found announcements.

The Media Director of the Poughkeepsie City School District, Len Marcus, found coordinating production on five different series understandably "hard to keep going," and was concentrating on individual shows by the time of our interview. But past series produced by high school students in classes for the access channel included "Focus on Living,"about community services, "En Foco," a Spanish language series, "Jack's Back Porch," on environmental and political issues, and other series on arts and yoga.

"Studio 601" was a public affairs talk show produced by Kingston High School students. Instructor Fernando Licopoli noted that the only adult role was as advisor/director. Inviting both community members and other students as guests, "Studio 601" explored social issues in a show on teenagers and alcoholism and a show on cults.

There were many school news programs. "Hurricane Watch" was a weekly news show produced by West Hampton Beach Schools. By the time of our survey, 245 consecutive weekly shows of up to one hour had been aired in this series. Kingsborough High School had produced programs daily since 1973. These included morning news, energy tips, interviews about historical moments, menu announcements, schools announcements, "Principal's Moment," and a "School Information Series" on educational topics, with call-in questions.

Call-ins were also part of the Gloversville

"Know Your School District" series, about various aspects of the school district. Scarsdale also brought district issues and administrators to the public in "Video Insight," hosted by the Superintendent of Schools.

School Video and Access

Where did schools show these videotapes? Of the 72 schools we surveyed, forty-one, or 57 percent, programmed tapes on access channels. Almost half of these also programmed tapes on educational access channels, twelve on Local Origination channels, and a few on government and leased access channels. Schools in our survey averaged 1.3 hours a week (2.3 shows per month) on access, but some, like East Hampton High School, cablecast as often as five hours per week.

Many schools had closed circuit systems that distributed programming within the school. (We did not collect data on this.) Schools also showed tapes on decks and monitors for individual classrooms or assemblies. Seven respondents noted district-wide tape exchanges. One, Ilion, noted exchanges between "schools, districts, parents and civic groups, but not by cable." One reported distribution and screenings by a local library. Three-quarterss kept the tapes they produced for some period of time.

Publicity

For publicizing the programs, the advantage of producing within a community institution is clear. Many schools included listings and reviews in school calendars and other mailings sent to all parents or all residents in the school district. In addition, about a third sent press releases to local media about their tapes, and some printed reviews of tapes in their own media.

Why or Why Not Use Access?

Some schools felt that student work wasn't of sufficient quality to cablecast to the public. Others used video mostly to document school events, shows for parents, special school functions, or specifically educational programs that might not be of interest to the general public.

Some noted problems in working with cable operators as a reason not to show tapes on access channels. Representatives of one school that produced quite a bit of video said they had produced one show for access, and the time and energy it took to compile this program and the difficulty in working with the cable access channel did not encourage them to continue. Another, with three courses in TV production, complained of the "hassle" and said the cable company messed up by taking tapes off in the middle. One noted that the school could cablecast more if it had a live feed, since taking tapes over to the head end on the cable company's schedule was their "hassle." Other schools, however, noted cooperative productions with the cable company, or borrowed extra equipment from the cable operator or access center for students to use.

On the other hand, several schools noted the benefits of showing tapes on access. Charles Perah at Moriah Central High School, which had just recently begun production and ran the local Community Bulletin Board out of the school library, said that the ability to make TV had motivated the students a lot, and the community was excited about local production. A spokesperson for Mendon-Pittsford High School said that the thought of reaching the whole community through cable access inspired students who wanted to produce, and parents were excited about seeing their children on TV. The success of the program, according to Connie Richardson, School Library Media Specialist and AV Technician at Mendon-Pittsford, depended on the committment of the students and of someone willing to put in time with them, the support of the district, and an understanding of the difference between programming young people produce and commercial TV.

Schools were often the main production center for the community (about twenty percent of our survey). Some ran the Community Bulletin Board and also programmed tapes. For example, at Ticonderoga Senior High School, community organizations could bring in tapes but the school decided what to show. In theory, said Virginia LaPointe, Library Media Specialist at Ticonderoga, they tried to avoid controversy, but they hadn't

had any trouble so far.

Production

How did schools produce videotapes? Two thirds of the schools in our survey (44 of the 66 that produced) had only one staff person responsible for video; most of the rest had two. Often one person coordinated video districtwide.

Both students and teachers worked on tapes in most cases. About one-eighth of the schools involved AV consultants or staff. A handful allowed community volunteers to help. Production roles seemed shared, or seemed to alternate between students and staff. Some tapes were mostly the product of student work, while others were made by teachers and AV staff. Students were least likely to edit or to train others; teachers and AV staff least likely to act as talent or play the technical roles.

Over half of the schools in our survey were high schools. Fourteen middle schools, ten elementary schools and six programs for kindergarten through twelfth grade were also included. As

Mamaroneck High School
Westchester County

Video & Access

Had a cable hook-up. Used video as an educational tool with four production courses and one independent study option. An informal video club met after school. School programs were for video production, and not explicitly for cable, but programs produced at the school were shown on a combined government-educational access channel. This programming totalled eight shows per month, or two and a half hours on access. The school shared its facilities with LMC-TV, a non-profit access facility. See profile of LMC-TV on page XX.

Programs

Programs included a daily live news program, candidates' nights, "The Thinnest House in the World," produced with the local historical society, a music video to orginal music composed by a teacher, a soap opera, original stories, documentation of the arts/environmental "Chase Harbor Celebration," a series featuring student artwork including art video, forums with the School Superintendent with questions from students and parents, and a "Blast from the Past" show using old half-inch reel-to-reel productions. The district sent tapes out to many places, including Austin,Texas, Reading, Virginia, and Arlington, Massachusetts. It did cooperative productions with the public library, other schools in the district, and local dance groups. With the Police Department, the district was taping twenty vignettes on child safety at the time of our survey. It kept a tape archive. The staff was headed by TV Coordinator, Michael Witsch.

Equipment

Equipment included six half-inch Beta decks, one 3/4-inch deck, one half-inch reel-to-reel portable deck, eight single-tube cameras, five black-and-white cameras, two half-inch editing systems, one 3/4-inch editing system, and one studio with a live feed. Community residents could use the equipment through LMC-TV, the affililiated access center.

Training

In addition to courses and the video club, the school offered workshops for staff sponsored by the district or by the Mamaroneck Teachers Institute.

Budget

$65.000.

Publicity

Sent PR to local media, and ran a Community Bulletin Board channel on cable, including program announcements.

noted above, more schools produced video as an extra-curricular activity than as part of regular curriculum. A significant number produced tapes in both contexts.

All of the schools that produced videotapes had their own production equipment, ranging from one VHS portapak to a full studio plus portable equipment and a mobile van. None seemed to have an overabundance of equipment, considering the number of students using it.

Twenty-six, or 39 % of the schools with equipment allowed community members to borrow it, most often if the community representatives allowed students to work on their tapes, or if their use was community related. Over half of the schools did cooperative productions — with other

Cortland City Schools
Cortland County

Video & Access

Had a cable hook-up. Used videotapes of programs shown on CNN and public broadcasting as educational tools, and planned to use cablecasts similarly. Produced video in both curricular and extracurricular activities. These tapes were shown on the access channel. The school was a main production center for access in the area. Programming averaged five shows per month, or two hours per week.

Programs

Recent programs included one on a bus rodeo, one on the lunch system, and a dance program. A class titled "You and the Law" staged a crime, mock trial and investigation all the way through to prison. High school students made three-minute book commercials for second graders. A group of students went to France, made a "hello" tape and hoped to institute a tape exchange with their French counterparts. Students received "more requests than they could handle" to cover local history subjects. Self-help tapes included one on teen suicide. Public Service Announcements included one on health issues. High school students helped a local channel tape government meetings. The school kept a tape archive.

Production

District-level video coordinator Jim Forshee taught industrial arts, managed video supplies, and coordinated production and workshops.

Equipment

Equipment included eight 3/4-inch non-portable decks, one half-inch portable VHS deck, one portable 3/4-inch deck, two portable half-inch reel-to-reel decks, three single tube camera, three black-and-white cameras, two 3/4-inch editing systems, nineteen monitors, and one studio (in the High School). Community residents could use the equipment if students did the taping. Cooperative productions done in this way had involved community organizations, the cable operator, media arts centers, and local government agencies.

Training

The school district provided training for staff and students. BOCES also provided training. Jim Forshee expressed his philosophy for staff training thus: "One of my main goals is to make them not afraid of video equipment. I want to get the whole staff involved."

Funding

Funds from the school district's operating budget totalled approximately $10,000 per year. The district had received $100,000 worth of equipment in three years.

Publicity

Local newspapers listed shows. These listings were coordinated through the local cable programmer.

schools, community organizations, government officials or agencies, libraries, cable operators, universities and the teachers' union.

At Mamaroneck High School, where the school facility was shared with the public access center, Michael Witsch, TV Coordinator, said, "The marriage of David's program [public access] and Mike's [high school video] has led to some very nice cooperation between adults and students."

Video Equipment at Public Schools

equipment	number of schools	percent of schls in survey	average number at each school
Video decks	63	88%	4.7
Cameras [1]	72	100%	3.7
Editing	28	42%	1.5
Studio	41	62%	1
Live feed	24	36%	1
Mobile van	5	8%	1
Special Effects Gen.[2]	2	3%	
Character generator[2]	1		
Audio mixer[2]	1		

Equipment

Most schools had a moderate number of the essentials: decks and cameras. Not all had portable equipment, and a surprising number had no editing facilities.

The amount and kinds of equipment a school had depended on its production needs — or perhaps equipment ownership determined the amount of production. The relationship between amount of equipment and amount of production was not entirely clear. One school, with just one VHS portapak, taped just sports events. But at Lake George High School, where extra-curricular student productions included live coverage of winter sports and tapes for community groups, the amount of programming ranged from 100 to 400 hours a year. Lake George listed four decks and five cameras, but three of the decks were outdated half-inch reel-to-reel; one was 3/4-inch.

Mamaroneck Instructional Media Center, serving four elementary schools, provided each school with a portapak and use of a multi-purpose room as a studio. They mostly taped plays and concerts, and individual teachers also arranged cooperative productions, for example with the local historical society.

Pleasantville Middle School, with four cameras and two decks (excluding old black-and-white and reel-to-reel equipment), produced an average of four programs a month of "whatever comes up: concerts, trips, interviews, assemblies, etc." Students were assisted by Media Department staff in this extra-curricular activity.

Other schools produced tapes as part of their regular curriculum. One approach was through a magnet school. Roosevelt High School in Yonkers had a studio facility run by students in a magnet program, drawing students from the whole school district. While the magnet program had started just two years prior to our survey, the three-year TV/Video Communications curriculum had been running for five years, and staff members we talked to were enthusiastic about it, and about using access. Productions included a daily news show shot in the studio, a PTA school affairs program, an outreach program for handicapped children, and music videos (which were popular with the students but unpopular with certain community members who complained they were "in poor taste"). The channel programed fifty hours a week, of which ten to fifteen hours were produced by schools in the district, twenty hours were imported and the rest of the time was filled by a message generator.

In our survey, the outstanding examples of schools generating production were also main production centers for access in their communities.

Funding

Most of the funding for ongoing video production came from school or school district operating budgets. In a few cases, these funds were supplemented by contributions from cable companies, corporations, community organizations, and grassroots or other fundraising. One school representative said students sold candy bars to raise money. Another reported that a particularly entrepreneurial student had raised "a couple thousand dollars" from local businesses to underwrite the local news program. A few schools noted that money for equipment was raised through federal grants, or special corporate grants or donations: one from the local office of a multinational corporation, another a donation of equipment from a local TV station. Budgets for video in schools across the state ranged from nothing to $100,000, but most budgets quoted to us did not include salaries or equipment purchase. The average for what was probably just supplies was $9,340.

The East Hampton High School video production center provides an example of a school developing a student video program with very little money. The program's coordinator, Salvatore Tocci, got donations of TV sets through appeals to the community, received matching grants for some equipment, did much of the construction and wiring for the studio himself with help from community volunteers, paid students to help through a Youth Employment Training Program, and raised money from parents to pay a broadcast fee to show out-of-town basketball games when the high school team made it to the playoffs.

William Floyd High School
Suffolk County

Video & Access

Produced videotapes as an extra-curricular activity through the Communications Arts Club. Production averaged four programs per month, or half an hour per week on the access channel.

Programs

Programs included "Update News," a half-hour weekly news magazine anchored by three people, a third to a half of which was shot on location, with a regular segment on school sports; a special entitled "A Walk through Time," about William Floyd, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; political forums, most recently on a $2 million federal grant for toxic wastes, and on the Shoreham nuclear energy plant; a profile of a visiting composer from Yugoslavia; an annual Christmas Parade; and activities of the Foreign Language Honor Society. Cooperative productions had included work with "every one of the 28 service organizations in the community, from pancake breakfasts to fundraising for handicapped children." The school had also taped segments of local concerts and information from the Community Library, the Ambulance Corps, the Fire Department, and the Police Museum. The school kept a tape archive. The staff person in charge of all this was Scott Tighe, Director of District AV, who ran the district audio-visual department, acted as advisor to the Communications Arts Club, and directed the news show.

Equipment

Equipment included two 3/4-inch stationary decks, one portable 3/4-inch deck, two single-tube cameras, one black-and-white camera, one 3/4-inch editing system, and one studio. High school and middle school students and staff used this equipment. News production drew upon other equipment resources. The equipment was not available for community use outside of the school.

Publicity

Published in cable guide.

Students at East Hampton worked on tapes as course work and as extracurricular activity. They produced a wide variety of community oriented programming: "Town Hall Report" featured a local newspaper reporter interviewing town officials, and "BBS Talks To" was a local news series, often the only TV covering hot local issues like public hearings on the nuclear power plant. Live local election returns and a series on healthy cooking filled out the schedule. The school's shows were on cable five hours a week, on average. Equipment consisted of one VHS portable system, 3/4-inch editing, and a mobile van. The annual budget was estimated at $7,000.

Notes:

1. Some of these cameras were probably camcorders with recording capability.

2. SEGs, character generators and audio mixers were not specifically listed on our survey but were noted by some respondents under "other equipment."

Chapter 11
Libraries and Access

We surveyed all twenty-six library systems in New York State and selected branches or member libraries that we believed might use video or public access cable television. We received responses from 25 systems (all but the New York Public Library, in Manhattan) and from 44 member libraries.[1]

All but two library systems (Brooklyn and Queens) had cable TV in at least part of the regions they served, although cable coverage could be spotty, particularly in rural areas, and rarely covered an entire region at the time of our study.

Only five library systems and fourteen member libraries we surveyed had hook-ups that allowed them to receive cable TV, and four of these branches had not actually connected their hook-ups. Thus only five library systems and ten member libraries offered cable TV viewing for library patrons, and two of these branch libraries further reported that patrons rarely took advantage of this service.

Monroe County Library System and Rochester Public Library

Pat Mackey, Director of Library Promotions, has a long-standing interest in media. She compiled and distributed several editions of a list of New York State libraries and library systems that used video, with descriptions of how they used it.

Rochester Public Library presented "Cablegram," a weekly half-hour program about library services, materials and events, on American Cablevision's Channel 34, a combination public and government access channel. The library also programmed taped interviews, local history and events, training tapes and tapes from the library's video collection.

The library obtained its $21,000 annual video budget partially from LSCA. It publicized shows in its monthly calendar and through video-text announcements on the government access channel.

Rundel Memorial Library, also in the Monroe County Library System, kept a collection of a tapes produced by Portable Channel, a Rochester area media arts center that operated until the mid-1980s.

Video Production

In New York State, seven library systems produced videotapes at the system level or in their central branch. An additional eight systems had one or more member libraries that actively produced videotapes; in several cases the system relied on one of those member libraries for its video services. Fourteen additional branch libraries we surveyed also produced videotapes, for a total of fifteen systems and 22 branches. Of the 25 library systems in our survey, ten said they knew of no video production or use of public access cable at the system level or among their member libraries.

Public Access Cable TV

Three library systems and fourteen branch libraries put programs on public access cable TV. One of these systems and one of the branches did not produce the tapes they cablecast, but obtained them from outside sources. Mid-York Library had produced tapes regularly at an earlier time, but staff shortages had forced it to cut back. At the time of our survey, it cablecast tapes from the Adult Independent Learning series and other educational programs from its video collection. Kingston Area Library also occasionally cablecast tapes it had shown in its public video screenings.

Two library systems and thirteen branches produced the tapes they aired on public access. Most of these cablecast public access shows on a frequent or regular basis — one as little as three times a year, one as often as 24 times a month.

Both systems and five of the branches maintained regularly scheduled time slots on the public access channel, making them regular cable programmers. These were:

- Monroe County Library System /Rochester Public Library
- Mid York Library System, based in Utica
- Albany Public Library, part of the Upper Hudson Library Federation
- Bethlehem Public Library, part of the Upper Hudson Library Federation
- Crandall Library, in Glens Falls, part of the Southern Adirondack Library System
- Tompkins County Public Library, in Ithaca, part of the Finger Lakes Library System
- White Plains Public Library, in the Westchester Library System

Bethlehem Public Library

This library was very involved in video, programming six hours per week on the public access channel. It also, although rarely, presented public video screenings, offered free video production workshops, allowed community groups and individuals to use its video equipment, and kept a collection of community produced tapes. It exchanged programming and showed its tapes on public access channels on other cable systems, and publicized its shows widely. It produced programs in cooperation with community organizations, media arts centers, local government agencies and schools. Such joint productions included a panel discussion with Physicians for Social Responsibility, a tour of a historic home, and two how-to shows on special effects and scripting videotapes.

Bethlehem Library's annual video and cable budget of $15,000 came from a combination of library operating funds, the cable company, and the New York State Council on the Arts.

Programming

Libraries' three most common types of programming were tapes on visiting artists and authors, children's storytelling , and information on library services and events.

The libraries that regularly used public access tended to broaden their interests to include more diverse programming fare. Crandall Library cablecast series on local folk-life — crafts, traditions, and storytelling. Monroe County Library System/Rochester Public Library cablecast tapes on local history and events and tapes from its local video collection. Bethlehem and Albany Public Libraries both ran extremely diverse schedules that ranged from art video to local political and social issues.

Most of those using access only rarely stuck to the three most common types of library programming. But other programs did appear. Ossining, for example, cablecast its annual concert series and Great Neck Public Library cablecast tapes made by the students in its after-school program. Croton Free Library taped and cablecast its monthly bulletin board display.

Video Equipment

Eleven library systems and thirteen member libraries in our survey had their own video production equipment. Of these, seven library systems and eleven branches used their equipment to produce tapes.

Some libraries produced tapes even though they had no video production equipment. Six of these libraries were in Westchester, the county with the greatest provision of public access in the state (and one of the state's richest). Of these six Westchester libraries, three used cable company facilities to produce tapes. One in White Plains used the public access facility housed in the library itself (although it was operated autonomously). Another, in Tuckahoe, used facilities maintained by the town's Citizens' Cable TV Committee. The sixth borrowed home video equipment from a member of the library committee.

Three of the libraries that produced tapes without owning equipment belonged to the Nioga

Library System and called on the system's staff to bring in video equipment when they want to produce a tape. Of the remaining two libraries, one used cable company facilities and the other used a local public access cable TV center.

A few systems allowed the public to borrow the video production equipment they owned. Only one branch, Port Washington Library, charged a fee for equipment use, and the fee was well below commercial rates. The other two branches, Bethlehem and Albany Public Libraries, operated substantial public video programs. In fact, Albany Public Library was acting as the city's public access center on an interim basis. Most of the remaining systems and branches reserved their video equipment for in-house or system use — or let the equipment lie fallow.

Some of the systems and the branches with production equipment did not produce tapes. Two had produced regularly at an earlier time. By the time of our survey, one of these no longer used its equipment at all. The other, along with the remaining two systems, offered video equipment for use by member libraries.

Of the two branches with fallow equipment, one had produced tapes until shortly before our survey, and was deciding whether to sell the equipment or establish a public equipment loan program. The other had put its video equipment away in boxes, and the Young Adult Librarian reported, "Nobody here knows how to use it. I think we're scared of it."

Counting systems and branches together, fourteen libraries had VHS decks and four had Beta decks for video production. Ten libraries had higher quality 3/4-inch decks for production, but seven had old-fashioned reel-to-reel half-inchdecks still on hand. The only one that had only reel-to-reel had discontinued production. A few had both half-inch and 3/4-inch production equipment. Half of those with production equipment had only one deck, while half had more than one and slightly over half of the libraries with production equipment had more than one camera.

Editing

Only five library systems and five branches in the state had video editing machines. Of these, two had only half-inch reel-to-reel editing, and one had both a half-inch Beta and a 3/4-inch editing set-up. Of all the libraries with cameras and decks, thirteen had no editing facilities at all.

Studios and Live Feeds

Two library systems and three branches had their own video studios but only one system (Monroe/Rochester) and two branches (Albany and Bethlehem) used their studios to produce

Crandall Library
Glens Falls

Christine MacDonald, this library's director, was active in the Film/Video Roundtable of the New York State Library Association. The library had at one time produced tapes regularly for public access, providing two hours of programming for twenty weeks each year. At the time of our study it had halted production, but planned to buy new equipment and resume shortly.

This library programmed series of CAPS-award winning videotapes and other programs. It kept a collection of the tapes it had produced itself and a series on local artists. It hoped to begin an exchange of tapes with a number of other New York State libraries that also programmed tapes for public access channels.

Co-productions had included one with a local women's group, Everywoman's Council.

The library's audio-visual budget of $7,000 covered purchase of records and films as well as videotapes. In 1985 an additional $3,000 was earmarked for equipment purchase. Salaries were additional.

tapes for public access.

Although one library system and three branches had a live cable feed, allowing them to cablecast programs directly at the time of production, only two branch libraries actually put tapes on cable — Albany and Tompkins County. The third, Great Neck Public Library, preferred to use its live feed to cablecast alpha-numeric announcements. It produced and cablecast its programs from the cable company's facilities. The one system with a live feed, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus, had used its feeduntil shortly before our survey, when it discontinued its long-time access series.

Albany Public Library

Albany Public Library acted as the interim public access center in the city during the period of our study. Its media librarian, Bob Katz, was very committed to library use of video and cable. The library had a studio with a live cable feed. Anyone who wanted to produce a show could call and make an appointment. Equipment was available free, although it could not be taken out of the library. Six hours of access programming a week came out of this arrangement, much of it produced by community and other local groups. The center exchanged tapes with the neighboring Schenectady Access Center, which cablecast them on access on the TCI/Schenectady Cablevision system.

Groups that used the library as an access facility included public schools, which produced a series on authors; the Visiting Nurses Association for the Blind; Common Cause and the Stop Drunk Driving Campaign; the Police Department; the Fire Department; the FAA; and the Traffic Safety Division. Five or six years prior to our survey the library had produced a series of tapes on signing for the deaf and a series of oral history tapes. These were kept in the library. It also cablecast tapes from Governor Cuomo sent by the New York State Association of Cable Companies/New York State Cable TV Association.

Training

Only two branches, Port Washington and Albany, and one library system, Wayne County, offered video production training to the public. Five library systems (and no branches) offered such training to library staff. One library, Great Neck, offered video workshops specially for high school students as part of its after-school program.

Local Videotape Collections

Nine of the systems and thirteen of the branches we surveyed kept a collection — however small — of locally produced tapes, including the tapes they had produced themselves. Of the seven library systems and 22 branches that produced tapes, only five systems and nine branches kept a collection of locally produced tapes, whether their own or made by others.

Publicity

All the libraries that regularly programmed shows for cable publicized their shows, and so did three additional branch libraries that only programmed public access shows occasionally. Eight libraries sent press releases or announcements to local media. Seven distributed schedules in the library or to member libraries of the system, three printed reviews in library newsletter, one included announcements on the cable channel guide, and one put announcements in the cable company's monthly listings. Most used more than one method to publicize their shows.

Funding

The lack of solid and consistent funding stands as the single most obvious obstacle to libraries' involvement with video and public access cable. Producing tapes takes staff time and energy — which translates directly into a need for funds. More than one library-run public access series had

ended in the two years prior to our survey because funds had either been cut back or directed elsewhere.

There were a few positive notes. One of the library systems and three of the branch libraries that produced tapes for public access received funding from sources beyond the library's regular operating budget. Monroe County Library System/Rochester Public Library paid for its access activity with operating funds and an LSCA grant. Port Washington Library supplemented operating funds with grant money from the New York State Council on the Arts. Bethlehem Public Library received funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and support from the local cable company in addition to its own operating funds. And Tompkins County Public Library avoided using library operating funds to pay for access by raising donations from local businesses and foundations.

But there were more disappointing notes concerning funding. The Chautauqua-Cattaragus Library System had been one of the state's pioneers in video use. In 1980 it already sustained a video viewing center, a circulating collection that emphasized independent productions, and a regular cable series. But even then it had already begun to de-emphasize production. Jean Haynes, Film/Video Librarian for the system, explained, "We have a small staff and have found it better to purchase locally produced tapes for our collection rather than attempting to produce tapes ourselves."

Buying and maintaining equipment also takes funds. Bob Katz, who ran public access for the Albany Public Library, observed that a decade of experience with video and cable had brought many libraries to a point at which they preferred to use cable company facilities rather than maintaining studios and equipment of their own. "Running a studio is just too expensive," he said. In fact, technical wear and tear on the studio limited this library's production to a "talking heads" format.

Finding a regular source of video equipment outside the library, therefore, can be a benefit, and not necessarily a drawback. A considerable number of the libraries that produced videotapes in the state arranged to use video equipment belonging to the local cable company or public access facility. Some branches used equipment that belonged to the library system as a whole, and one even borrowed a committee member's home video system. The White Plains Library benefited from having the local public access facility housed in the same building. The library didn't even compute an annual budget for the videotapes it produced; one of the staff members who participated said, "The cost of tape and staff time is minimal."

Video programs seemed to be most vulnerable to cuts when libraries relied solely on LSCA funds for their support. The Onondaga County Public Library used to run an LSCA-funded video project, but after a couple of years the funding was withdrawn. At the same time, the library system

Tompkins County Public Library

The Finger Lakes Library System relied on this library for its video services.

Tompkins Library produced regularly for public access, providing two hours of programming per week, plus two hours of repeats. It had a live feed to the cable system. Individuals and groups from outside the library could not use its equipment, but the library co-produced tapes with schools and arts organizations in the area. It occasionally exchanged tapes with other public access channels.

Louis Mezgar, the library's director, reported that it was one of the three main centers for access production in Ithaca. Its video and cable activities were funded not out of the library's operating budget, but with money raised from private foundations and local businesses.

Regular series included "Focus on Art" (fine arts), "Focus On Music" (junior music club), " Focus on Poetry," "Distinctive Voices" (interviews with authors), and "What's Happening" (a community magazine). The last was cablecast weekly. The rest were monthly shows.

lost funds for other important programs — and video fell by the wayside. The system still had its video equipment, but no staff knew how to use it and member libraries rarely, if ever, borrowed it for their own use.

Last, the Steele Memorial Library, in Elmira, produced and cablecast a half-hour public access program two nights a week until its LSCA grant

Highlights: Libraries and Public Access

We received responses from 25 of the state's 26 library systems and 44 of the state's approximately 600 branch and member libraries. Of these:

- 5 systems and 14 branches were hooked up to receive cable TV.
- 7 systems and 21 branches produced videotapes.
- 10 of the state's library systems said they knew of no video production at the system level or in any of their member libraries.
- 13 systems and 14 branches had their own video production equipment.
- 11 branch libraries produced videotapes even though they owned no video equipment themselves. They borrowed equipment from local cable companies, public access facilities, their library systems and members of library committees.
- 3 systems and 6 branches allowed the public to borrow video production equipment. Only one branch charged a fee, and this was well below commercial rates.
- 3 systems and 13 branches put programs on public access TV.
- 2 systems and 13 branches produced their own tapes from public access. One system programmed Adult Independent Learning materials, and one branch cablecast the tapes it showed in its public video screenings. One branch co-produced tapes with the local cable company's Local Origination channel.
- 2 systems and 7 branches cablecast public access shows on a frequent or regular basis — one as little as three times a year, one as often as 24 times a month. Both of these systems and four of these branches had regularly scheduled time-slots on public access channels.
- Libraries' three most common types of public access programming were tapes on visiting artists and authors, children's storytelling, and information on library services and events. Many libraries had more diverse programming.
- 14 libraries had half-inch VHS equipment, 4 had half-inch Beta decks, 7 still had half-inch reel-to-reel equipment and 10 had 3/4-inch equipment.
- Only 5 systems and 5 branch libraries had video editing equipment — 4 in half-inch, 5 in 3/4-inch and one in both formats.
- One system and 3 branches had live cable feeds. 2 branches used the feed for public access programming, one used it for a bulletin board of library announcements, and the system did not use the feed at the time of our survey.
- One system and 4 branches offered video production training to the public. Five offered training to staff of member libraries.
- One branch offered after-school video workshops to high school students.
- 10 systems and 13 branches kept collections of locally produced tapes.
- Only one of the systems and 3 of the branches that produced tapes for public access received funding from sources other than the library's regular operating budget. These sources consisted of LSCA funds, grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, donations from corporations, local businesses and foundations, and support from the local cable company.

ran out a year before our survey. The library, under a new director, decided to draw upon LSCA to pay for a job-placement program instead, and discontinued its video production. When we spoke with a member of the library staff, the equipment was awaiting assessment so the library could decide whether to sell it or establish a public equipment loan program.

System Support for Member Libraries

Particularly noteworthy is Westchester Library System's use of an LSCA grant for Margo Cornelius to conduct a study, hold meetings of interested Westchester branch librarians and make recommendations regarding libraries' use of video and public access cable.

Most of the library systems that owned equipment made it available to their branches. Even when system staff was limited this could work out to be a fruitful arrangement. Wayne County Library System had a full video production/post-production facility, but had had no staff to operate since 1983. In this system, however, member libraries, libraries from other systems in the Pioneer federation, and county non-profit groups continued to use the studio to produce and edit tapes, even though the system itself could provide only minimal training and supervision.

Also noteworthy was the Nioga Library System which, with its fairly limited equipment, managed to serve a significant number of branch libraries when they wanted to produce tapes. Other systems had more equipment but less branch use of it — sometimes none at all.

White Plains Public Library Westchester County

The local access center, the White Plains Public Access Commission, had its own facilities in the library, although it operated as an autonomous body. The library used the studio and the center's staff to tape regular programs.

The library ran three series: "Footnotes," interviews with guest speakers; "Inside the Museum Gallery," a visiting artists program that ran once every couple of months, and "Storytime," a children's story hour. The Children's Department reserved the studio on Wednesdays for two hours, and programmed an hour most weeks during the school year. The Adult Program also programmed a half-hour slot per week, with shows repeated twice. These programs were carried by other franchises in Westchester County in addition to the White Plains system.

The library did not set aside a separate budget for this video activity, as the cost of tape and staff was minimal, due to the presence of the access facility.

It planned to print and hand out bookmarks with the shows' regular schedules.

Notes:

1. There were about 600 branch and member libraries in New York State.

Chapter 12
Artists, Art Organizations and Access

Ever since portable video became available in the late 1960s, artists have been in the forefront of its development and use. From community oriented history, documentation and celebration, through experiments with the technology itself, to provocative investigative documentary, media artists have been leaders of community video. Artists and arts organizations are using public access in a variety of ways. Media artists and media collectives have provided crucial access to equipment, training, and advocacy for public access throughout its history. And most art organizations welcome any medium that could help them reach new audiences.

One would expect that artists' tapes would be among the most frequent on public access cable. But this is not the case. Our study found that the potential for artists and art organizations on access in 1984 and 1985 was still vastly underdeveloped, considering what they have to offer and to gain. Still, compared to other groups of individuals and institutions, participation in access by artists and art organizations was fairly impressive.

We surveyed a range of organizations across the state, including media arts centers, arts councils, arts service organizations, community arts centers, presentation and exhibition organizations, and media producers.[1]

The Overall View

We found that most art organizations were located in areas with cable television, but few had hook-ups in their offices. Nearly forty percent produced videotapes and over one-third programmed these tapes on local access channels. Close to 25 percent programmed tapes on other media, including access channels in other areas, government, educational and leased access, public broadcasting (local PBS stations were often cited), Local Origination and even commercial television. Independent distribution of tapes was also mentioned frequently (by 17.2 percent of those we surveyed). Many organizations had public screenings (30.1 percent) or in-house screenings (15.1 percent), and almost half owned some

Kinds of Videotapes Made at or by Arts Organizations

*28 - documentation of art and artists
*20 - video art
*18 - performance
*18 - documentaries
*17 - music
15 - local political and social issues
*14 - dance
*13 - theatre
13 - international issues
13 - minority groups' concerns
*12 - music video
*11 - narrative/fiction
11 - community organizations' programs
10 - women's programs
10 - educational shows
7 - senior citizens' programs
7 - foreign language shows
*6 - variety shows
5 - childrens' programs
5 - local news/news magazine
5 - financial/economic programs
5 - handicapped people's concerns
5 - self-help/health, psychology
4 - religious programs
4 - other performing arts
4 - sports
7 - "other"
4 - "adult" programs
3 - local government services
1 - local government meetings

* indicates arts-related programs